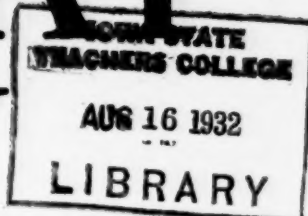


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# SATURDAY REVIEW



No. 4006. Vol. 154  
FOUNDED 1885

6 August 1932

Price Threepence  
REGISTERED AS A NEWSPAPER

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## Notes of the Week

The middle-aged man has lived two—or is it three?—lives. The first life was cut violently short eighteen years ago, when War shattered all the stability in which he so pathetically believed. Then came the trial, the acceptance of danger in place of security, the acknowledgment of death as an enemy lurking at the street corner for young and old alike. Finally, there was the effort to re-adjust life to the conditions laid down by peril and death.

For a moment it seemed with the War, as with all spiritual experiences, that humanity had reached a final revelation, that everything would be changed, because millions had died before their day. Now we are slowly learning that it was just the first step on the road of sacrifice.

The memory of the four years of War will endure in its intensity just so long as those who lived through them remain on earth. It is inevitable that its recollection will fade; the Marne and the Somme will become to rising generations matters of history no more substantial than Waterloo, Trafalgar and the Crimea to those born in the eighties.

Deep emotions such as those that broke out in 1914 release both good and bad and time alone can sort the wheat from the tares. Facile eloquence can all too easily disguise the truths which as the Saturday Reviewer points out elsewhere are manifest to "a humble and contrite heart." The war was mid-wife to a thousand catch phrases born in the fertile brains of specious politicians and the grain of reality hidden in the depth of most of them has all the danger of the half-truth that is worse than a lie.

### Their Requiem

"The war to end war," "making the world safe for democracy" and similar sayings at the time sounded plausible and encouraging, but now we are face to face with the realities of life and human nature.

The war has shattered the fabric of security which seemed impregnable in Victorian times. It has changed our country and the essence of our social life. Yet the eternal verities remain. Human nature is still plodding weary on its pilgrimage to a distant shrine and there is no short cut. There can be no change or progress except from within and the best Requiem for our dead lies not in memorials or in tombstones, but in the acceptance of spiritual things.

Till that acceptance has spread through the civil-

ised world the parable of the strong man armed must stand beside the Sermon on the Mount.

\*\*

The true victor of the German elections last Sunday is General von Schleicher, the minister of defence and head of Germany's military forces. A Reichstag without any clear majority is what he and his coadjutor, Colonel von Papen, the Reichskanzler, wanted, and they have got it. Whatever the Reichstag now does, it is practically in the hands of the Militarist-junker Government. This is the curious result of the elaborate precautions designed by the Weimar constitution "to make the world safe for democracy," which now are seen to be about as hollow as other devices invented for the same purpose.

This is the really outstanding result of the elections: no one party, or even combination of parties, can so control the Reichstag as to impose any other government than the present on Germany. There emerge from the struggle a possible "Right" group of Hitlerites and Nationalists with half a score of oddments thrown in, amounting to 278; a "Weimar" group of Socialists and Centre, totalling 213; and Communists, Bavarian People's Party, etc., with a strength of 117.

It is clear that any group could be beaten by its opponents, except in the unlikely event of the Centre, which is Dr. Brüning's party, throwing in its lot definitely with the Right.

\*\*

An immense gain—123 seats—has been achieved by the Hitlerites. This exactly suits the Schleicher-Papen government's book; the Hitler movement has shown its teeth to the world, yet they are not strong enough to rend Germany. Despite his froth and bluster, it is by no means certain that Hitler's own book is not better suited by this result than by the overwhelming victory which he professed to hope.

Hitlerism is not a programme: it is a state of mind. Put in office with responsibility, it would court a serious risk of exposure. Kept in the background, it remains what it has been, a fermenting spirit ever ready to keep the dull mass of the German nation in a state of effervescence.

\*\*

Many years ago a German political refugee from Bismarck's police, who became librarian to Queen Alexandra, was wont to astonish English friends by saying that the German democrat, if ordered, would "shoot his own grandmother." Herein lies the utility of Hitlerism to this present Reichs-

wehr government: it keeps Germans ready to shoot, whether their own or other people's grandmothers matters little.

The growth of the Communist party in the Reichstag from 77 to 89 brings grist to the same mill, as affording an opportunity the government has already been quick to take of showing its imperative duty to govern strongly. Govern strongly it therefore will, and it is far more likely that Hitler will, on the quiet if not openly, in any case on terms to be arranged, give his support. Germany has no need of a Mussolini, nor is Hitler the man to fill the part.

\*\*

On Germany's foreign policy the election will have no effect. Nor indeed would any other result have had more, even in the most improbable event of the Socialists' recovering their strength instead of losing a further seven per cent. of it. German eyes all look to the same goal when they are directed across the frontier; the reversal of the verdict of 1918.

\*\*

#### Quem Jupiter vult perdere

Olympian Jove of old might joy to see,  
A brave man battling with adversity,  
So "Uncle Sam" from his so high estate  
Europe's unnumbered ills can contemplate;  
Nor, to assuage them, will a finger raise  
Lest, peradventure, causing them to praise.  
M.B.

\*\*

The death of Monsignor Ignaz Seipel at the hands of a Socialist assassin—for he died as the result of the attack on his life in 1924—serves to remind us not only of the dangers attaching to the trade of statesman in central and South-eastern Europe but of the power in this world of ecclesiastical values. From a chair of Moral Theology Seipel was pitchforked by Revolution into a cabinet, and with the outfit he had acquired in the seminary became one of the leading men in Europe.

\*\*

The Christian Socialist party (that existed long before the war) was essentially anti-jew and anti-socialist as the word is commonly used, and as leader of this party after having been its *eminence grise* behind Mayr and Schober, Seipel in 1922 took over the reins. His greatest success was the obtaining of an international loan for Austria, which he did by ingeniously spreading the suggestion that otherwise Austria would form a customs union with Italy; his next, but perhaps in the long run more

#### Prelate and Statesman

#### Christian Socialism

#### Hitlerism's Sweet Uses

#### The Prophetic Librarian

important, the abrogation of the Socialist Rent Restriction Act, under which the original Austrian landlords starved while war profiteering tenants made fortunes out of subleases. For this he was hated by Socialists of all countries, as also for his patronage of the anti-red Heimwehr volunteer guards.

\* \*

Austere, persistent, covert, devout, Mgr. Seipel was the very type of post Reformation political priest. Since he had never learned to fit the shoes he filled so successfully, it must be admitted that the priesthood develops more practical sagacity than many would admit. We owe him praise; Austria, perhaps, owes him her life.

\* \*

Who knows the Chaca? All who know "Green Hell." Who did know the Chaca? Not a soul, save geographical experts, before the appearance of that glorious book of adventure. From those pages we remember it as an uncharted district, hardly attainable, barely habitable by white men, plagued with flies, a torture from drought once the traveller is off the river banks: yet a bone of contention between two fire-eaters, Bolivia and Paraguay.

\* \*

Not for the first time does the Chaca threaten war. Once before, the ministrations of M. Briand, who could be energetic on occasion as well as ingenious, relieved the crisis. Even without the spell-binder of the League of Nations, serious conflict may again be avoided. We laugh—or used to—at South American wars and revolutions, but wrongly. Rarely is fighting more relentless and, of its kind, skilful than may be seen in them; nowhere are soldiers hardier or greater foot-sloggers. A brilliant North American military historian was wont to maintain that his countrymen would some day get an unpleasant lesson at the hands of fierce troops across the Panama Canal, should U.S. policy ever result in active intervention in the southern continent.

Bolivia and Paraguay would really seem to have their dander up. From East and West and South (the Argentine sending a mere twenty battalions to hold a watching brief) the array is summoned. An Amazon corps—most appropriate name here—is formed. From Pacific and Atlantic alike volunteers flock to the colours. And, as an initial irony of Mars, the first sufferers, from the bombs of Bolivian aeroplanes, are a colony of Mennonites, who are a pacifist sect emigrated from Canada.

When the right-hand man of Sir Herbert Samuel (Sir Charles Hobhouse, formerly P.M.G.), addresses the faithful in Wilts, the politician puts his ear to the ground. "No tax reduction feasible in April." Savings in War Loan Conversion are ear-marked, plus new economies, to meet the falling revenues for income tax. Now a Socialist has disclosed that Mr. Snowden, as he then was, told the Labour Party in private meeting that 4s. in the £. was the economic limit of income tax. That was the Treasury view. In the end it is what 4,500,000 are able to earn, and strive to earn, that provides the milch-cow. And even 4s. is far too much.

Nevertheless, if a prominent Tory K.C. on the back-bench is able to speak for others in Parliament, really drastic measures in education, roads, and services, as well as in Whitehall, must be looked for this autumn. Conversion has done something to set trade moving: Ottawa may do more. But economy is urgent. It is one whole shilling off in April that taxpayers care about. And they mean to have a Chancellor who will take it off.

\* \*

Additions to the Bench are now talked about hopefully, and such talk is wholesome hearing. The Western Circuit, no longer slow and easy, had a record Summer Assize; the Northern put in over a month at Liverpool and Manchester; the South-Eastern is still out. A Bench fit for '71 is undermanned in '32. Local Assizes in truth relieve London, while local suitors have no less rights than prosperous City merchants.

Speculation is rife over the succession to Sir Henry Dickens as Common Serjeant. In practice nowadays the Lord Chancellor advises. The rights of Corporation patronage led to scandals almost as gross as New York's Tammany. The salary is £3,500 a year and no "cuts," almost a High Court Judge's. Perhaps a London by-election will give the clue.

\* \*

"The fluttering of the doveot," "the cat among the pigeons," "the devil among the tailors"—none of the cant and current phrases do real justice to the public impression made by Mr. Blakiston, headmaster of Lancing,

when he made a speech to the British Medical Association. What he seemed to be telling us, according to every newspaper except the *Times*, was that the public schoolboy of to-day was a thoroughly unpleasant specimen, to whom cheating, thieving, lying and slacking were the acknowledged purposes of life. No wonder the cries, groans, ails and angers resounded through Fleet Street, clubs, rectories, and Services.

**Not Quite  
so  
Blakiston**



The joke—a poor one—is that Mr. Blakiston was really talking about “the Abnormal Boy” and that the B.M.A. corrected the erroneous impression only in the *Times*—the one paper which had not been misled! Mr. Blakiston seems to have been ill served. But really he asked for what he got when he gave such an address at all.

\* \*

For our part we are sick and tired of all this tosh about schoolboys. It is a minor misfortune of our

### **Floodlight and Folly**

age that the public school—vastly increased in its numbers and *quantum mutatus ab illo!*—has become a good “story” with the popular press. Whether they have, like Lord Beaverbrook, a bias against Eton or a positive passion for Winchester makes no difference. The doings of schoolboys are “featured” and headmasters, being as human as Bishops or Deans, can find their way into the limelight much too easily. But if we are sick and tired of all this tosh, what about the normal, decent public schoolboy? He must be foaming at the mouth with impotent rage.

The public school system very likely needs some new medicine and certain changes in particular directions are obviously overdue. What the boy wants is to be left alone, to find his own level in his own way by the reasonably controlled aid of his fellows. If this preposterous floodlighting goes on, we might as well scrap the public schools for all the good they can do our sons.

\* \*

Actual news from Ottawa at the moment is neither good nor bad, save in so far as no news is good news and a rest from press

### **Narrowing Acres**

polemics of decided advantage. But, since our interest in the subject is obvious, we may be allowed the hope that the English farmer is not in any way fading out of the Ottawa picture. At any rate, he is fading out of existence more and more rapidly here at home, where the position for farming, especially livestock, is more, not less, desperate. Death duties, taxation, broken down landlords and broken up estates, all reacting on farmers ruined by the ignorant follies of successive governments and parties—these are the familiar facts.

But the real tragedy is reached in realising that the remedy is neither esoteric nor beyond our reach, but fairly obvious and well within our means. The real hope is that the townsman has widened his horizon and sees the countryman as the complement of himself.

\* \*

As usual, the professors have fallen very foul of the driving of motor cars on the crowded roads of a public holiday period. Now

### **Ancient and Fish-like**

the professors, of course, are the “motoring correspondents” (who is not an editor in Fleet Street is almost sure to

be a correspondent) of the daily newspapers. They generally know quite a lot about the mechanism of motor cars and more about the motor trade and the arrangement of its publicity. But, however great or less great may be their own talent at the wheel, they are no better judges of good or bad driving than their fellows who have driven cars for several years. So we need not be too dreadfully frightened.

On the whole, the driving on our roads to-day is not too bad. We shall never eliminate the homicidal or suicidal lunatic or the driver who loses “nerve” at the first onset of sudden dilemma. But we might by decree remove from the roads antiquated cars which can’t accelerate and are likely to smash some vital part. These, with decrepit taxicabs, ought to be liable to arrest and fine on sight.

\* \*

For the sixth year running the U.S.A. has failed in her desperate challenge. (Let us not speak of our own.) Yet again have three of the four

### **Magnificent Borotra**

famous musketeers of the racquet, though still without their Athos, held the lists against all comers. If Lacoste may be held the Athos, albeit the youngest, of that astonishing sporting brotherhood, and though it owns no Porthos, surely the secret, incalculable Cochet is its Aramis. Who is d’Artagnan, no man can doubt. Borotra, the most dashing hero ever seen on a court, the indomitable, the chivalrous, is fitted by the name like a glove.

We said last week that all depended on Aramis. It was a platitude and, like many platitudes, has proved false. D’Artagnan was the man, a d’Artagnan of over 33 years, yet younger than any in his *furia francese* and his scintillating brio. This was a magnificent performance indeed. The man said he was too old last year; many critics thought with him. For d’Artagnan’s game is one to aggravate the toll taken by *anno domini*, and we admit—*mea magna culpa*—to having reckoned him as a spent force. Now he has dashed the hopes of the youngest and the fiercest.

\* \*

What is most magnificent in Borotra’s magnificence is that he has never been what Americans call a “practical” amateur, one, that is, who makes the game support him in devious ways.

### **A Real Amateur**

He has never made lawn tennis a whole-time job, but earns his living in a business subject to lively competition, making a great success of it, and finding time besides work and games to drain the cup of pleasure.

Aramis took a back seat this time. His one essential job he did well enough, got rattled in the second that might have clinched matters, and then having seen d’Artagnan bear the colours of France to victory cared no more. Cochet won two sets with

ease—one to love!—from the American champion and, having done so, retired to that figurative tent that has so often proved the despair of his admirers, without the urgent call of necessity to make him emerge from it, according to his bewildering habit, at the last moment. Now for next year, and may the colours of England once more be put upon the map!

\* \*

The great Dissenting foundation of Mill Hill has arranged, for the convenience of harassed parents, a scheme of easy—or uneasy—payments for its educational services. And, notwithstanding the self-satisfaction of other governing bodies, other great schools will be driven to the same expedient. At £150-250 a year, awkwardly demanding payment in September, January and April, school bills are the major embarrassment of the professional classes. Coupled with that, the years from now to 1936 have a phenomenally low entry due to the war-losses in our manhood of 1917-18.

\* \*

#### Broadcasting House

There are few denizens of Broadcasting House who do not endeavour, from early morning till quite late at night, to combat evil and to promote the good.—*Mr. Harold Nicolson.*

You, Sirs, who grumble at the B.B.C.

And criticise the programmes it provides,  
Think of this noble edifice and be

Proud of the selfless heroes that it hides!

Even though high-brow talks may bore you stiff,  
Or comic turns are not the sort you'd choose,  
Even if jazz offends your ears or if

You cannot stand the "Weather" or the  
"News,"

Remember that from morn till late at night

(Often foregoing sleep and even food)

These splendid chaps do try with all their might  
To combat evil and promote the good!

W. HODGSON BURNET.

\* \*

The B.B.C.'s latest proposal would seem to be to dispense with all performances by restaurant

#### Home-made Jazz

dance-bands and to broadcast only Henry Hall's B.B.C. dance-band.

The reason is doubtless economy, though we are informed that objection is taken to outside bands "plugging" tunes which they are paid by the publishers to perform. Unfortunately Henry Hall's B.B.C. dance-band suffers by comparison with its predecessors. Its level of execution is uneven, its humour inclined to be heavy-footed: while we fear that too many repetitions of one of its favourite numbers, "Old 'Eidelberg," will scarcely assist the super-cultured mandarins of the B.B.C. to raise the standard of public elocution and pronunciation.

Will this be a record or, at all events, a very good season for game and those who shoot it?

#### A Good Game Season?

It is ill to prophesy until the entries are actually made in the game book, and it is impossible to speak confidently of partridges until the corn crops are cut. But pheasants, at all events, both wild and hand-reared, are, thus far, doing extremely well in the South, and the birds are now big enough to deal with such enemies as rain-storms and gapes.

There was some cold, wet weather when chicks were hatching, and nests were late. But for five or six weeks in June and July the weather was such as good keepers may pray for, and, if some of the earlier broods came to grief, the second nests should have had an excellent chance. Coveys of partridges may not be large; but they should be strong and well-grown when September comes. And reports of grouse are encouraging. A really good game year seldom comes, even when it ought to come. But the omens are propitious.

\* \*

The students at the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester—the largest institution of its kind in

#### Dickens on Farming

the country, are to be congratulated on the "Gazette" which they have just produced. It is in reality a quite sizeable book, admirably written by contributors of knowledge and experience, and containing much that is of great value to agriculturalists.

Charles Dickens wrote an article on the College in 1868; it is reprinted in the "Gazette." The great novelist wrote:—

"That part of the holding of a farmer or landowner which pays best for cultivation is the small estate within the ring-fence of his skull. Let him begin with the right tillage of his brains, and it shall be well with his grains, roots, herbage and forage, sheep and cattle; they shall thrive and he shall thrive. "Practice with Science" is now the adopted motto of the Royal Agricultural Society. Amateur farming by men whose real business lies in other trades, and who, without any true scientific training, play with a few of the results of science, cannot pay and never ought to pay."

\* \*

The public schools have broken up as usual in a spate of oratory. Eminent ladies and gentlemen have made speeches and presented prizes to thousands of boys, who, it is to be feared, take singularly little interest in the eloquence so generously provided for them. In many schools Speech Day is an institution which nothing short of a cataclysm could upset, though the audience is pleased in proportion to the shortness of the speeches. There are one or two ancient schools where the business of breaking up is uninterrupted by orations, and their tradition of golden silence is quite as highly prized by them as that of silver oratory by the rest.

# Maxton's Mess of Pottage

By H. R. S. Phillpott

**E**SAU has sold the I.L.P. birth-right for a mess of Left-wing pottage. How Keir Hardie, "Wullie" Anderson and the rest of them must be turning if they know.

In 1893 the I.L.P. was founded with the object of establishing a working-class political party as distinct from the Tories and the Liberals. For years its founders devoted themselves to the conversion of Liberal trade unionists—but not to turning wage-earners into Socialists. The word Socialism was barred.

They worked hard for six years and, in 1899, succeeded in getting the Trades Union Congress to invite all the organised Labour bodies to discuss the organisation of increased representation in Parliament.

In the beginning Socialism was kept carefully in the background, but by 1924 (the year that saw the first Labour Government) Socialism had become definitely allied to the profession and the policy of the party. But a year or two before that the Clydesiders had swept into Parliament to upset procedure, to get themselves suspended for disorderly behaviour, to create "scenes," to get into the newspaper headlines, to begin to destroy (although they did not realise what they were doing) what their old leaders had built up for them.

## Petted and Spoiled

They defied and insulted men like MacDonald and Snowden who had devoted half their lives to consolidating the movement which is now being shattered. They were petted, and spoiled, and made much of until they forced the Labour Party disciplinarians to descend upon them.

So came the quarrel of last week, brought about by the inevitable insistence of the Parliamentary Labour Party (not now—such is the irony of events—represented by MacDonald and Snowden) on the observance of its Standing Orders which impose no more than Party loyalty and obedience to the Whips.

At Bradford, which is the real birthplace and nursery of the I.L.P., Mr. Maxton was helped to his temporary victory by Mr. Fenner Brockway, the Rev. Campbell Stephen, and Mr. George Buchanan, a strangely assorted trio who were able to get a majority for a Maxton who has been likened to all sorts of figures in the French revolution but who will never live up to the reputation of any one of these continental aliases.

What of the opposition? It was led by Mr. E. F. Wise, a former M.P. for Leicester, a one-time Civil Servant who went, as an economist, in the capacity of an adviser with the British peace delegation to Versailles, and who is now the representative of the big Russian co-operative organisation. He supplied the brains, and Mr. Dollan, a member of the Glasgow City Council, supplied the organisation. While Mr. David Kirkwood, who used

to breathe fire when Mr. Maxton breathed slaughter, and slaughter when Mr. Maxton breathed fire, lined up with the Party disciplinarians!

Meanwhile idealists like Dr. Salter, of Bermondsey, and Mr. Wilfred Leach, of Bradford itself, had safeguarded themselves from the Maxton rebellion by withdrawing from the whole affair.

It all seems extremely complicated but it is really very simple, and boils itself down to this: The Bradford resolution was carried by a majority (with a goodly number of abstentions) but it will never be put into practical effect.

It instructed I.L.P. branches to disaffiliate from the Labour Party. Seventy or eighty of them will do nothing of the sort. And thousands of individual members will refuse to obey.

## Premises and Funds

Already there are rumours of such serious complications as legal actions. Many of the local branches of the I.L.P. have built or acquired halls and club premises. If they decline to follow the instructions of the Bradford conference to whom do the premises belong? The courts may be called upon to settle that.

And funds. Practically all the trade unions are affiliated to the Labour Party. Under the 1927 Act they ballot, and the members contract-in or contract-out in connection with the political levy. The Act resulted in less than sixty per cent. contracting in and the balance has not yet been redressed. The Maxtonites are counting on persuading many of those who now contract-in to contract-out and voluntarily give their political contributions to the new I.L.P. They are thereby relying on splitting not only the political Labour movement but the trade unionists.

But, strange as it may seem to the Maxtonites, they are old-fashioned and clumsy. Their leaders of years ago set out to establish a party of the Left. That involved the destruction of the Liberals with some of them allying themselves to the Tories and the rest gravitating towards the Socialists. The break-up of Liberalism has been realised, but whereas some fragments of the Liberal Party refuse to glue themselves to Labour so Labour equally refuses to set out to attract them.

The dream of forty years ago has been shattered but the imbecility of the modern I.L.P. is setting out to try it all over again in circumstances ten times less propitious.

Back in 1893 the I.L.P. eschewed the word Socialism. The Labour Party to-day professes to turn from it with a shudder. The modern I.L.P. as represented by the Bradford conference leaps to greet it and seems likely to smash itself instead of the Party which it is trying to desert.

"And Esau said: Behold I am at the point to die, and what profit shall this birthright do to me?"



## THIS WEEK'S ARGUMENT

## Is the English Inn Thoroughly Bad?

YES, by W. HERBERT.

THE English wayside inn has long been a by-word, no one can deny that there are exceptions, but on the whole has any country of Western Europe other than Spain ever maddened the traveller with more unsatisfactory hospitality? How many innkeepers are there in the country who gaze with stupefied disgust at the stranger who asks timidly for a square meal?

In France or Italy it is likely enough that he will be met with a shake of the head and a rueful confession that there is really nothing to eat. He is welcome, however, to what there is. "Really nothing to eat" proves to be an omelette, sardines, possibly veal or chicken and excellent bread and cheese.

I remember being assured at a lonely inn in Sussex that there was nothing at all to eat, not even bread and cheese. We were on the point of resuming our despondent tramp through heavy rain, only mildly comforted with beer, when a voyage of discovery led me to a large dish of home-made sausage rolls.

"Do you call sausage rolls nothing to eat," I asked? "Don't you sell them?"

"We only sell them separately to our regular customers, but if you like, we will sell you a couple."

Pretentious hotels are the worst sinners in the matter of food. Imagination is utterly banished from their menus. Every day thousands and thousands of identical luncheons are served in them: cold meat, tough, with badly cooked vegetables, apple tart, and some abominable imported "Cheddar" cheese. Often the monotony of the dinners is concealed by French names on the bill of fare and strong sauces are needed to disguise the tasteless food.

French country hotels are to-day, thanks to the Touring Club of France, ahead of most of their opposite numbers over here. They have hot and cold water galore and baths are ready at a moment's notice. Moreover, the Frenchman knows when a bed is comfortable. He will have nothing to do with the hard and bumpy mattresses which mine host of the village loves to provide for his guests.

There is an inn in a village not far from London, where the food is good, the company sympathetic and the beer above reproach. Yet there is not a bed in its historic bedrooms, fit for anything but a penitentiary. The publican receives his visitors with a generous smile, but all his worst instincts are aroused, if anyone dares hint that his beds are not so comfortable as they might be. Nothing will persuade him to change them, and perhaps he is right from his point of view, because he has an abundance of visitors ready to come to an inn which despite this defect is infinitely superior to every other house of call within a ten mile radius.

NO, by G. CAMERON.

HOW boring is this myth about the English Inn. How easy for my opponent and his fellows to complain that "hikers" cannot get food from wayside inns at any hour of the day or night, that the greater inn cannot think beyond cold meat and cheese and has uncomfortable beds, and that hotels have bad wine lists, an uneducated taste in furniture and decorations, pretentious cookery, a lack of bathrooms, and a garish atmosphere.

These accusations were invented by Beelzebub, the father of lies, and are repeated by his children.

I do not know why those who walk should expect to lunch or dine in the ordinary way when they come across a little inn serving some remote hamlet, kept by a man and his wife. These wayside pubs exist to sell beer and port to the villager, with tobacco and cigarettes. Those who keep them do not cook more than once a day, if that much, and their kettle is not always boiling or ready to be boiled. Yet in almost all cases a dish of eggs and bacon can be had, if one will wait for them.

As for the greater inn, cold meat and cheese should be enough for ordinary needs, and the beds, if not fit for the indolent limbs of an age spoiled by luxury, are generally free from insects—which is more than can be said for their foreign rivals.

As for the English hotels, of town and country, I protest that there is very little to criticise. At the best, and at the highest price, you can find box-springs, running water, private bathrooms, various wines, all fit to drink, a *chef* who knows his business, and a scheme of decoration which is perfectly fitted to a hotel, though it might be abhorrent in your own house.

Service, hospitality, range of diversion, personal freedom, food, drink, and beds—these are what one seeks from a hotel, and in England one really obtains what the foreign advertiser labels optimistically "tout confort." I have broken down in a car in the wilds of Yorkshire at 9 p.m. on an October evening and been treated with wonderful kindness—warmed by a special fire, fed on chops, and cared for till the morn. Why should I calumniate my country because I had a feather bed which played fugues and had but one tortuous channel in which one could rest at all? I have stayed quite uncomfortably at a little inn in Wales—with excellent trout fishing thrown in.

The English inn is not bad. It is good and it is always getting better. Moreover, I am sick and tired of the "omelettes in a moment" which perambulate every village in France, Italy or Spain; of the bureaucratised efficiency of the German system. So long as you are content with the moon and do not demand the stars as well, English inns are excellent. And the stars are thrown in only in Utopia.

# Might-Have-Been Affairs

## The Neutrality of England

By C. E. Bechhofer Roberts

IT is possible that the British Government's suggestion of a perpetual moratorium for all debts arising out of the Great War might have received some sort of consideration in Washington in 1937, had not all negotiations been perforce broken off by the sudden commencement of hostilities between the United States and Japan.

Before we pass to an account of the Japanese-American War, it may be of historical interest to list the heads of the British claim. Briefly, the British Note pointed out that the United States entered the Great War in 1917 for the same reasons as those which brought England in three years before; that during the three years, England had poured out blood and wealth in the common cause, whereas the United States had only supplied munitions—a not unreasonable division of effort, but one which should not leave the United States in the position of claiming vast financial sacrifices from England at the end of the War; that the United States had recognised a difference between War Debts and all other obligations by considerably reducing the amounts payable by every other nation that owed her money after the War, though she continued to treat England rather more harshly than even their former enemies; that England had contracted much of her indebtedness on behalf of the other allies, who were receiving financial favour after favour from both England and the United States.

### Debts in the South

A politely worded appendix to the British Note reminded the American Government that certain States in the South were still considerably in the debt of English creditors for loans contracted at the time of the Civil War. However, as I have said, this Note (which was drafted on the initiative of the Conservative Government at a moment when, most unfortunately, the majority of its regular leaders were incapacitated) was received just when nobody at Washington had time to attend to it. So it was shelved and Europe saw, not perhaps without some small measure of secret satisfaction, the United States confronted with the greatest peril of its history.

It is impossible yet to state with certainty what were the exact causes of the Japanese-American War. Undoubtedly both sides had given and received provocation. The American colour-bar against immigration and landowning had long irked Japanese patriots; at the same time the Americans felt themselves aggrieved by the alleged infringement of their various rights in China and elsewhere. Race-riots in California coincided with anti-American manifestations in Manchuria; the American Government claimed

to have irrefutable proof of Japanese support for nationalist movements in the Philippines, Cuba, Mexico and other countries. In any case, war flared up early in July; the Philippines were evacuated at once by the American garrison; a combined force of Japanese ships and aircraft rushed towards the Californian coast; and the Americans closed the Panama Canal to all vessels except their own, and issued an eloquent appeal to the nations of Europe for assistance against the enemy.

### Explaining to England

Who will ever forget the wave of deputations that came in England to plead the American cause?

Hundreds of speakers of every type—from anti-Prohibitionist spellbinders to Theosophical revivalists—abandoned their usual theses and addressed "Help America" meetings in every town and village of the British Isles. We were adjured to remember how America had dashed to our assistance in the Great War; how the bonds which united the English-speaking peoples for hundreds of years had grown ever stronger with the passing of time; how England's interests in the East were linked up with the United States; in short, every possible rhetorical device and argument were employed to turn English sentiment to the American side in the conflict.

Japanese propagandists, on the other hand, recalled that they had declared war on Germany in 1914 and held the Eastern seas safe for the Allies at a time when the United States were merely pestering us with complaints about our searching of foreign vessels; that the two countries had always been on the friendliest terms; that Japan had unswervingly stood by us in all our Oriental difficulties: their speakers, for all their efforts, could not compete in fluency and rhodomontade with their American rivals.

But almost unanimously the English people agreed not to prejudge the issue. With one accord factories all over the country were converted to making munitions for whichever side could carry them away; every day dozens of new factories were set up. An attempt by the Americans to blockade the entrance to the British Channel and to close the Straits of Gibraltar and the Suez Canal to all ships carrying supplies for Japanese use was frustrated by the British declaration of the Beaverbrook doctrine (on the lines of the Monro doctrine) which denied to any foreign power the right to interfere in British affairs.

It is no secret now that this declaration was preceded by a solemn Japanese undertaking to avoid even the appearance of aggression in Australasia. Thus the manufacture and despatch of



supplies to both combatants were ensured.

English opinion followed with sympathetic interest the braver exploits of both sides. The deliberate suicide of the first hundred thousand Japanese to land in California, who threw away their lives to ensure that the rest of the invading force should not be opposed, made a tremendous impression on English minds.

Everybody now knows that the Japanese-American War ended in a stalemate. The Japanese easily retained control of the Pacific but were unable to advance into the interior of America, while the Americans, by controlling the Atlantic, were able to sustain their fighting forces and civilians with all the resources that could be shipped from Europe. The whole world breathed a sigh of relief when the Armistice was signed in Mexico City on August 19th, 1940.

Nobody who was present, in person or by televisor, will ever forget the emotional scenes accompanying the return of the film stars to Hollywood after the occupation, when Mr. Charles Chaplin shuffled past Senator Hiram Johnson and Major-General Upton Sinclair at the head of nearly two thousand world's sweethearts.

Friendly relations between the United States and England, which had been—on the surface at least—so marked during the war, now became momentarily imperilled; for the Americans, while continuing to demand and receive the interest on our War loans, at once repudiated their new war debts to us. Fortunately, the older leaders of the Conservative Government were back at their posts and, in loyal adherence to the Baldwin tradition, accepted the American proposals without protest and, of course, continued to pay our own debts.

## "A Humble and a Contrite Heart"

By the Saturday Reviewer

**"LET** the dead bury the dead." It is not, of course, a popular text on which to preach.

Sentiment is a dangerous opponent, and such a ceremony as the unveiling at Thiepval of the memorial to the graveless dead of the Somme sets going a new surge of emotions which lie restless in every one of us.

But is all the eloquence of the least avail? So far as human reason goes, of none.

We are still talking of our dead, still paying them the tribute of tears. We are still making neat war cemeteries and raising splendid war memorials and, to all seeming, we are likely to carry on until the greater part of civilised Europe is covered by these links with a receding past or the first gun-fire of a new war scatters them in ruins.

We are forever protesting that we must rend our hearts and not our garments, and swearing over the bodies of those who died in what we still call the Great War that death shall be the gate of life, and that our children and their children shall be secured against any other war.

Then we go to Geneva or Lausanne to beat our swords into ploughshares, to recreate on the larger stage the spirit of self-sacrificing comradeship which was—we now pretend—the mainspring of human and national action during the years of war. And, even to the most gullible or the most ignorant, the bickerings that follow a "general" statement of policy make a savagely ironic end.

We are what we were. Why not admit it? Why trouble the rest of our dead by shams and insincerities which must affront the part of them that lives?

Moreover, fourteen years have passed already since the last of our companions died in action and the men who are thrusting for command to-day were then still thoughtless boys. How much longer can we maintain this weak reliance on the dead?

But if Armistice Day is to be spared the vengeance of Time, we had better stop maundering over our war graves and using appeals to the valour of our dead—appeals which endow them all with qualities and intentions which must surprise mightily a great many of them—either as opium for nations or as substitutes for clear thought and sensible action.

If we would keep the peace we must obviously keep it in the old-fashioned way by making its disturbance a very grave risk. If we would avoid for posterity the bloody path we trod, we must so imbue ourselves and others with the terror of reprisals that no hope of material gain can persuade anyone to fire the first shot.

That, you say, is to treat humanity as if it were a vicious criminal? Well, so it still is. And that, you say, is to despair of human progress?

Not at all. Who are we to measure by a Divine calendar? What are two thousand or tens of thousands of years to the Spirit we have labelled God? The Great War was not enough, portentous as it seemed to us. It was not the complete purge. It drained us of our life-blood and has left us, unchanged within, vapouring about the graves of better men.

So let us tackle facts by facing them and put aside our eye-wash and pretence. And let us, meekly kneeling upon our knees, make our humble confession to Almighty God. For it will only but surely be when our world has recovered a spiritual health that the too civilised hearts of men, which rule the policies of nations, can be rent. We need religion—some sort of spiritual faith, ancient or modern, pietistic or philosophic, Christian or mystic. When we have it we shall understand at last those strange six words "the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost." And we shall all be changed.

# A Note on the Hara-Kiri

By David L. Blumenfeld

IF there be an adage which aptly fits the Samurai code of *Bushido*—the Way of the Warrior—it is the time old saw that he who lives by the sword shall die by it.

To the gentleman of Old Japan was accorded the privilege of wearing two swords thrust through his girdle, and suicide by *hara-kiri*, involving the use of both the long and the short sword, was the method adopted when he had no alternative but to die. Technically, the performance of the *hara-kiri*, which literally translated means "cut-belly," was divided into two classes. There was the *hara-kiri* performed of a man's own free will, and there was the ceremonial *seppuku*—to use the more polite Chinese term for disembowelment—when a Samurai was ordered to die by Imperial or lordly decree.

In the first instance the suicide was performed in solitude, by virtue of the sudden decision brought on by unforeseen circumstances, and the ceremony performed as simply and as swiftly as possible. Defeated, maybe on the field of battle, or considering himself disgraced, the performer would lower his robes to the waist, tucking the sleeves of his kimono under his knees lest he fall backward in the death throes, and drawing his short sword, plunge it into his intestines, drawing the blade from one side of the belly to the other; then, after an upward cut he would remove the crimsoned blade, force it into his throat, and severing the jugular vein, die.

## Farewell Verse

On, or near the body men would afterwards find a written statement setting forth the reasons for the *seppuku*, with, like as not, a poem of *hokku*, verse in farewell to the dead man's relatives and friends.

"Why," men ask "should the Samurai choose such a 'messy' way of ending one's life?" The answer is not far to seek. For thousands of years the intestines were believed to be the abode of the soul. What more natural, then, that a gentleman in certain circumstances should expose that soul by *hara-kiri*, and so prove it to be stainless? *Hara-kiri* was a privilege of which every Samurai was proud, a rite which every warrior performed in mime from the time he first girded on a pair of boy's swords, thus half ridding the ritual proper of its terrors.

The true significance of the ceremonially ordered *hara-kiri*, in which the condemned man's head is cut off directly after the incision has been made in the belly and before he has time to disgrace himself by crying out, has been missed by most European writers. To see a Samurai squirm in agony in front of witnesses were a shameful thing. To the *Kaishaku* or second, an office often performed by the dead man's best friend, was therefore entrusted the painful duty of cutting off the head at one blow, immediately the principal withdrew the nine-and-a-

half inch *kusungobu* or *hara-kiri* dirk from the belly wound.

The old books of *seppuku* ritual abound in instructions for such seconds. Some ordain that the head should be cut off when the dagger tip touches the skin of the stomach, others that the blow should fall when the condemned man reaches forward to take the dagger from the wooden tray on which it is handed to him, others again claim that this is too soon; still others claim that the proper time is when the dirk is still in the wound, and the principal leans forward in his agony.

## Hired Temples

Most of such ceremonies took place at night, either in a temple specially hired for the occasion, or in the grounds of the Palace of one of the great lords into whose charge the condemned man had been placed. First into the place of execution, strewn with red mats and hung around with white silk screens, marched the man about to die, wearing a white ceremonial dress, closely guarded by the *Kaishaku* and other seconds, wearing their swords.

The condemned would kneel, facing the witnesses and the *Kaishaku* would squat a little behind him and to his left, baring his long sword (generally the principal's *katana*) and concealing it until the moment came to strike. The condemned, looking the witnesses in the face then says: "Sirs, you have done me the honour to witness my last few minutes on earth. For this I thank you, and have the honour to disembowel myself." Bowing, he allows his garments to slip down to his waist and taking the short blade from the tray handed him by one of the seconds, leans forward and thrusts it into his belly on the right side, a few inches below the navel. Then he draws the blade across to the left side, turns it in the wound, and makes an upward cut. During this ghastly performance not a spasm of pain can be seen on his face, but the *Kaishaku* who has been watching him like a cat rises noiselessly to his feet, weighs the mirror-surfaced *katana* for a split second in the air. There is a flash. . .

The *Kaishaku* bows, wipes his sword on a piece of rice paper concealed in his bosom for the purpose; the head is shown to the witnesses, the ritual is over.

Once, when the retainers of Asano Takumi no Kami were condemned to *hara-kiri*—the famous Forty-Seven Ronin of everlasting memory—and placed in the charge of different Daimyo, seventeen of them performed the *seppuku* in the garden of the Prince of Higo. When all was over it was suggested to the Prince that the place where they had struggled in their death agonies should be purified. But when he heard this proposal he ordered that the place be left as it was.

"For" said he "of what need to purify the spot where faithful Samurai have died by their own hand?"

## SHORT STORY

## Judson's Keeper

By Alan Bell

WE were talking about the census of barn owls begun by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Dewar saying that two pairs had nested with him this spring, so that he had been able to return a "score" of ten. Afterwards the conversation went round to the general utility of birds, then to the general ignorance of gamekeepers and so to the violent end of Judson's keeper the previous year. He was found on the fringe of a wood with the right side of his face—well, only half there, and a burst gun close by.

Accidents of that sort are rare nowadays, and I asked Dewar—who was Judson's neighbour—if he had come by the details. "'Accidental Death' was the verdict," he said with a touch of mystery, and proceeded to look wiser than one of his own owls.

I waited for a little and presently the story arrived. Dewar impressed me it was only surmise, and probably he is right—anyway, I shall refrain from going to Scotland Yard as a common informer.

"Poor old Judson lost a treasure there (began Dewar), a man who had only one idea—game. Stubbs was his unpoetic name; he was dark and had a small head, and he hailed from some God-forgotten hole in the fens—you know what they are often like from there, a deep streak of guile but sluggish-minded as a dyke. He wasn't sluggish at his work, though, by George!

"Zeal inside a thick skull expresses Stubbs. He was perpetually and doggedly on the war-path; conscientiously shot and trapped everything. You know the story of the keeper who killed some nightingales because they kept the pheasants awake? Stubbs must have been the original.

"Well, at the time of the accident there was a male hobby in the woods—ever seen a hobby? Gorgeous bird," explained Dewar briefly, "outflies everything, even swifts. This one was the first we had had in our parts since the War; the keepers have practically done in the whole tribe. Judson—he was nothing like as fierce as his servant, you know—told the fellow to leave this one alone, but it was hopeless from the first; Stubbs would have bagged a phoenix while it was rising from the ashes. I don't think there is much doubt he was after that hobby the evening his gun burst."

There was a pause, while I wondered what the little woodland falcon had to do with it. Dewar seemed a bit unsympathetic towards the dead keeper.

"Do you remember Kirby?"

Unexpected though the question was, I did instantly remember Kirby. A recluse, and above all, one of those men who live to keep alive a hatred of war in the rest of us. Wounds in Gallipoli, fever and enteric in Mesopotamia and

shell-shock and more wounds in France. Having endured all things, Kirby became a solitary; perhaps he had not much left to say to his brother-men. He had interred himself in a three-roomed cottage near Dewar's place, aloof and quite alone, his one interest, the one link holding him sane, being a passion for birds amounting absolutely to religion. Dewar had given him the run of his land, and I believe old Judson followed suit. We had fallen in with Kirby once, plodding back, binocular in hand, from a day's expedition. The conversation wasn't much, but I recollect stealing side-glances at his gaunt, sensitive profile and feeling sorry for the chap.

"Is he still as mad on birds as ever?" I said.

"Mad is the word," said Dewar. "I watched him standing in front of Stubb's gibbet once—counting. If ever there was blazing dangerous fury in a face—

"There were several jays," recalled Dewar, "and magpies, crows and rooks as well, a sparrowhawk, two inoffensive kestrels, five or six little owls and—oh, I forget. But if there had been anything like a hobby there, I don't know what Kirby might have done."

Something in Dewar's tone made me look at him sharply. "How do you mean?" I demanded. "Good heavens, Dewar, you're not connecting Kirby with—"

"Look here," said Dewar intently, "shall I tell you this: not twenty paces from where Stubbs lay I found a revolver bullet, flattened by hitting something hard—the barrel of a gun, for instance. And Kirby still has his Army revolver."

"But Stubbs was killed because his gun burst!"

"Of course it burst," cried Dewar. "By a chance in a million. Can't you guess? Stubbs is waiting, he spots the falcon, up goes his gun, he fires; and simultaneously someone else fires—only to frighten, no doubt, but nevertheless a bullet wrecks the barrel of the gun at the exact instant the keeper presses his trigger. Don't you see? An explosion intermitted like that would be as freakish as lightning—blow back, splay out the barrel, kill Stubbs, do any mortal thing!"

I stared.

"Mind you," said Dewar earnestly, "I would swear he didn't mean to kill. But think . . . He jumped up, dramatising the whole scene. "Here was Kirby, crazy at seeing one of our best and rarest birds going to that gibbet. To put Stubbs off, he fires—"

While he stood in that posture, arm extended, finger crooked, his eye glinting along imaginary sights, his whole aspect wildly explanatory, it recurred to me that Dewar is no bad shot with a revolver, and that his own hate of collectors and slayers of rare species has a touch almost of mania.

However, as I said, I am not going to Scotland Yard as a common informer.



# Red Letter Days

## The Salmon that Was Lost in the End

By Guy C. Pollock

**A**FTER the first trout, the first salmon; because I still believe that trout-fishing is a finer sport than salmon-fishing, and because I am sure that fishing is a finer sport than shooting.

Salmon-fishing is rather a daunting experience, like grouse-driving. It is on the large and expensive side and it falls to the lot of comparatively few good sportsmen, if those sportsmen are poor and honest men. Rods and reels are expensive, flies are expensive, you must have trouser waders, and salmon rivers do not flow up and down the country-side. Unless you are so lucky as to be entered to the game as a boy, you are quite likely to push it on one side in later years until chance brings you to it. But you may always entertain the secret plan of catching a salmon before you abandon the use of the rod.

Thus it was with me a few years ago when my then "boss" suggested a week on a salmon river where he had a rod to spare. I was sensible of his kindness, and of my secret plan. So I borrowed a rod—a so-so split cane of seventeen feet which was a little like the bow of Ulysses—and, in due course, set to work. The notion of casting a salmon fly did not alarm me. I had made a brief experiment on a sea shore many years ago, when a similar enterprise was brought to nothing by a drought, and the actual use of a salmon rod seemed to me comparatively simple, if a little irksome.

### The Pleasure of Power

There I was wrong. I don't think it is quite so simple as I at first believed and I am positive that it is not at all irksome. When things are going fairly well, there is nothing, I think, that can give a fisherman more pleasure than efficient casting with a salmon rod. A sense of power is added to the delight in mastery of a weapon which a trout-rod gives, and the rhythmical swish of a well-directed line makes intoxicating music. It would be dull to flog a trout-stream with a wet fly, however good the casting, for many hours without rising a fish. It is exhilarating to fish down a salmon pool or a succession of pools without a pull of any sort. All that is needed to keep one happy and alert is some positive evidence of fish in the water.

We had all—several of us—fished for several days in a low and decreasing water and no one had received any personal evidence of the existence of a salmon, when my host handed "Rough Hole" to me and went up two pools himself. Now "Rough Hole" was well named. It had a swift stream and the kind of uneven rocky bottom on which you could only move by shuffling one foot a few inches forward, feeling about for crevices and gaps, and eventually bringing the other alongside it. The run was under the opposite

bank and, fishing as long a line as I found I could manage reasonably, I started down it with a Silver Doctor. After a very little time I imagined the touch of a fish in the slack water beside the run. If it were so, then it was a smallish sea trout or brown trout, of which nothing came.

### Calm and Storm

Never mind, it cheered me up. It woke to fresh life my wife, who was on the bank with the gaff. It was the precursor of events. A few more cautious stumblings and I was a third of the way down the run. Just before my fly straightened out at the end of the cast I had a pull. For a moment I wondered to myself whether my fly had fouled a rock. Then the word "salmon" was hurled into my consciousness and I struck with excited fervour. For another moment everything was ominously still, as in the heavy air that stops breathing before a thunderstorm. And the next things of which I became suddenly and bewilderingly aware were a monstrously strong and heavy fish fighting me hard, a reel making the very devil of a noise, a line cutting the water like a knife edge, a huge and rather reddish shape in and out of the water, dripping sparkling jets as he flung himself about, two feet slipping about underneath me, and a heart beginning to hammer at my ribs.

Not by design, but by the habit of a fisherman, I succeeded in doing the right things and clambering to the bank. Then the real business began. It would be wearisome to you if I recounted the details of the next fifteen minutes. They have been repeated so often in print and otherwise. Indeed, as things happened each struck me by its expected familiarity. I said to myself, "Yes, you are just like Jones's salmon," or "I remember reading all about this 'turn' in Brown's book," or "Unless every author has lied, it is now time for you to rush madly across the river and wallow in the shallow water by the dangerous rock on the other side."

### According to Plan

This was when I had regained nearly all my line, the salmon was almost under my feet, and my wife handed me the gaff with the point bare, saying "Now we've got him." She has caught nearly as many trout as I have, but she has wasted less time studying books on salmon fishing. I had just time to shake a white-faced head at the offer of the gaff before the fish justified all the authors, and was wallowing right across the river before I could re-exert any pressure at all!

Later I agreed that this first salmon would belong to me and said as much. Ass, dolt, vain, incompetent braggart that I was! At this moment our salmon, as I thought, gathered new forces,

made his last *sortie*, and hurried irresistibly across the glide at the tail of "Rough Hole" into the broken water beyond. I felt it would be fatal to let him go and I could no more stop him than run on four legs. In truth they told me afterwards that he was undoubtedly washed out of the pool, being himself quite exhausted, and that I could and should have persuaded him away from the tail end where the current caught him.

Worse followed. I tried to cross the rough water still attached to the salmon, because a wood on my own bank prevented my following him down where I was. I was not half-way across before the water was well over my trouser waders. The going was bad and I was too middle-aged to risk being drowned for a fish. So I stumbled precariously back—still attached to the salmon. And all the time I could have crossed quite safely, if I had known the right place!

### Conversations

Then I hung desperately on, bringing him to a pause near my own bank, and my wife waded down with the gaff. But she had never gaffed a fish before and was overcome by nerve-stricken anxiety. She said "I can't." I said "What's he doing?" She said "He's opening his mouth."

Then I said—probably with oaths, which she was too excited to hear or resent—"Come back and take the rod."

So I manned—quite the wrong word, as you will see—the gaff and started down to a moribund salmon which might well have weighed twenty pounds. There I too suffered from a nerve-stricken anxiety. I stretched out the gaff across his back and hesitated, summoning courage to draw the point sharply in. In this very moment the cast parted at the knot above the fly, and the salmon slid slowly from my sight. I gazed in horror and then stumbled crazily down stream, making distraught and useless jabs with the gaff. Very soon the fish recovered, plunged twice, and went angrily away. I threw the gaff at the nearest tree, came out of the river, and stared in the face of Tragedy and my wife.

My first salmon. So far, my last.

Thus, then, my host found us two minutes later. Some premonition of need had come to him. He had left his pool and hurried down to see how I was getting on. He offered neither reproaches nor condolences. He knew what had happened.

He did not know that never again would he come so near to seeing me in tears.

## Wine Maxims

By C. W. Berry

THE Wine Cellar should be kept at an even temperature, 55deg. Fahrenheit is ideal, well ventilated, free from draughts. Dampness in a wine cellar is harmful to sparkling wines. Cleanliness is essential. Cobwebs are picturesque, but they do not tend to this essential.

Avoid sawdust in a wine cellar. It is the harbinger of many an evil. Vinegar in cask should never be kept in the cellar. Bins as they become empty should be well lime-whited. Do not be afraid of harming the weevil. Experience proves that there is less ullaging with bottles when capsoled, than with those treated with wax.

All wines should be kept lying down. White wines generally should be kept in the lowest or coolest bins. Spirits and liqueurs should be kept standing up. Wine has life. It should be handled with care. Crusted Ports must be binned away with the white splash mark uppermost and so held when decanting.

The more care given to the decanting of wine, the better the result and the greater the enjoyment.

Use a wide thread corkscrew for all corks. A narrow thread will pull away the centre of the cork. Claret should be served at the temperature of the dining room—chambré. Red Burgundy should be served at a moderate cellar temperature. White Wines should be served cold, not necessarily iced. Do not ice all the flavour out of Champagne.

Turn your back on your friends should you be opening a bottle of sparkling wine. When pulling a cork, always wrap a cloth round the bottle—a gash on my hand shows why. Never stand a bottle of wine in front of a fire, or plunge it into hot water. The shock is harmful. Serve white wine with fish. The only exception to prove the rule is a light vin rouge (such as Bourgeuil) with red mullet. Champagne can be served through a meal, a liqueur brandy to follow. What is more delectable than a bottle of Old Bordeaux with a saddle, or of Old Bourgogne with game?

Liqueur brandy should be served in light, tulip-shaped glasses and held in the hand until it has taken the warmth of the hand, which is the ideal temperature.

Do not force your opinion of a wine down the throats of your guests. Listen to theirs. You will have lots of fun.

Never guess at a vintage. Acknowledge you do not know, as is more often than not correct. Don't drink for the sake of drinking, but for the sake of health and enjoyment. The food value of wine must not be overlooked; should you desire an extra glass of wine, it would be well to forego "one of the cutlets." Out of sight—out of mind. A frequent visit to the cellar provides food for wholesome reflection.

Be certain that your wine is pure and good health will be your reward.

Take care of good wine and good wine will take good care of you.

## FILMS

By MARK FORREST.

*With Cobham to Kivu.* Marble Arch Pavilion.  
*Alone.* Directed by L. S. Trauberg. Academy.  
*Delicious.* General Release.

THE cinemas are making a definite effort to cater for the holidays and three new pictures, which should be popular with children and grown up people alike, make their appearance this week. These films are "Thark" at the New Gallery, "Kamet Conquered" at the Polytechnic and "With Cobham to Kivu" at the Marble Arch Pavilion.

"Thark" is a straightforward transcription of Mr. Travers' farce of the same name; the direction of Mr. Walls, though still uninspired, is much surer than it was when he began to make the screen versions of these farces and the absurdities of Ralph Lynn, Tom Walls himself, Mary Brough and Robertson Hare should cause as much laughter on the screen as they did in the theatre.

"Kamet Conquered" and "With Cobham to Kivu" are pictures in another category altogether. The former shows the accomplishment of the greatest mountaineering feat ever performed by man; the photography is good, but the humour a little facetious. The latter is a really admirable piece of work.

### Two Minor Faults

Sir Alan's object in flying down the Nile and making his hazardous flight across the Blue Mountains to the lonely lake of Kivu was to look for fresh bases suitable for seaplanes, and to demonstrate the practicability of this kind of transport in Africa. The pictorial record of this astonishing flight suffers from only two faults and these are minor ones. Kivu, having been reached, the film fades out somewhat abruptly before one has had time to get more than a glimpse of the lake and, thrilling as are Sir Alan's landings and taking-off's, there are too many of them.

Kivu itself is in the Belgian Congo halfway between Lakes Edward and Tanganyika; it was the last of the African lakes to be discovered and no one has ever landed before on its waters. Sir Alan's flight begins at Alexandria from which point he follows the Nile to Cairo, Luxor, Omdurman, Khartoum, Malakal and Entebbe. From Entebbe, which is on the shores of Victoria Nyanza, he makes the final dangerous hop across the mountains to Kivu. On the way his cameraman, Mr. Bennett, whose work throughout is excellent, manages to get some perfect "shots." Most extraordinary among these is the one of a herd of elephants trapped in a swamp; there are nearly a thousand of them and they are compelled to allow themselves to be photographed because they cannot untangle themselves from the mud while the "Valetta" circles about them. Crocodiles, and hippopotami are also photographed at close range and the famous Murchison Falls provide Mr. Bennett with an opportunity which he seizes with both hands. The Assouan Dam, the jungle and finally the storm-capped peaks of the

Blue Mountains are other "shots" which remain in the memory.

Too often with pictures of this kind the running commentary which accompanies them is either stupid or badly delivered. The explanatory matter here is neither the one nor the other, and the incidental music fits in unobtrusively. Such a film as this should be shown extensively in the schools; there is more to be learnt from it than from a score of geography lessons. I understand that there are two additional reels which take Sir Alan across Europe to Alexandria, but these will not be seen unless the picture is booked serially.

I referred to "Alone," the new picture at the Academy, when it was exhibited last year in New York; a short time ago the Film Society showed it to their members and now the general public has its first opportunity of seeing it. The director, Mr. L. S. Trauberg, is a brother of the man who made "The Blue Express," and his work is very nearly as impressive.

The story is that of a school teacher who is sent by the Soviet to a lonely place in Siberia on the Mongolian border and of her struggles against superstition and ignorance. The remarkable thing about the theme is that the individual is being glorified. So far collectivism has been the banner which the Russian pictures have constantly unfurled; but in "Alone," though the importance and invincibility of the Five Year Plan is not forgotten, it is the individual and not the machine that is emphasised.

### Fine Photography

The film opens a little jerkily and suffers from some weird post-synchronisation, but once the school teacher accepts the unpalatable task which the government has allotted to her, the picture gains smoothness and the direction lucidity. As usual with the Russian films the minor parts are perfectly played and the Mongolian types which have been assembled here are well contrasted. The opposition to the school teacher comes from the local Bey who is permitted to do what he likes by the idle head of the district Soviet. Fearing that the girl will bring down the wrath of Moscow on his head the Bey plans to get rid of her by abandoning her to her fate in the snow, and she, though she must have learnt the line "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes" at one time or another, falls into the trap. Her abandonment gives the director and Mr. Moskvin, the cameraman, a fine chance to make a magnificent sequence in the snow and some beautiful photography results. Up till now it is the school teacher's picture, but at the finish the efficiency Headquarters is shown and the accent placed upon the triumphal progress of the plan.

The most important of the general releases this week is "Delicious." Mr. Gershwin has written the incidental music and has made a good job of it, but unfortunately his score is being continually interrupted by the story. Janet Gaynor with a Scotch accent is too much of a bad thing altogether. Charles Farrell is still playing opposite her, so the rest is easily guessed.



## NEW NOVELS

*The Georgian House.* Frank Swinnerton. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

*Aria and Finale.* James Hanley. Boriswood. 5s.  
*Wanderers in the Mist.* Heinz Leipmann. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

*Prisoner's Base.* Olle Hedberg. P. Allen. 7s. 6d.  
*Tiger Standish.* Sydney Horler. John Long. 7s. 6d.

MR. Swinnerton has turned his pen towards the small country town, and against the background of the Georgian House which stands squarely on the main street he describes the petty jealousies, intrigues and misunderstandings which make up his plot.

The bare essentials of the story are mildly melodramatic. There is a hero, the man who succeeds to the Georgian House on the death of its owner. He has a past, but it is of that quixotic kind which is bound favourably to impress any woman. The shadier characters consist of a woman, the housekeeper and mistress of the previous owner of the house, and a young solicitor who is not averse to finding pleasure in another man's leavings. There is also, of course, the woman who was favourably impressed by the hero's past.

Philip Spears, the hero, marries Ruth Coulevain, the housekeeper and ex-mistress, while Rose Davitt, to whom Philip had confided his past, loves him in silence. The stage seems set for a long spell of unhappiness and misunderstanding until Philip finds in a secret drawer, a new will leaving the Georgian House to Ruth. Being an honourable man, he does not destroy it as he might so easily have done, but takes it to Ruth who is, in the words of the local gossips, "expecting." In her excitement over her good fortune, she reveals the fact that it is Leonard Holpen, the solicitor, who is responsible for her forthcoming advent into maternity. Philip leaves her, but when she tells Leonard of her good fortune, she finds that his affections have been transferred. "Hell holds no fury as a woman scorned" and Ruth conveniently cuts the Gordian knot by shooting both Leonard and herself. After a decent interval, Philip is united to his Rose.

Briefly, that is the story. But Mr. Swinnerton is an artist who does not paint crudely and his novel flows smoothly and evenly over the rather stony bed of his plot. He draws his characters with a fine sense of delineation and the country town atmosphere mellows the improbabilities of the story. It is a pleasant and agreeable book and very good holiday reading, but it leaves little impression behind it.

Very different is "Aria and Finale." Mr. Hanley is a master of realism and his work has the authentic touch of grim modernism. He writes about the sea; not, I hasten to add, of sunshine and storm or "a deep sleep when the long trick's over"; but of the sweat and toil of stokers, the fetid atmosphere and blistering language of the foc'sle and the violent passions of lower-deck ratings.

In each of the three stories in this book there is the same underlying theme, the hopelessness and uncertainty of life when old age approaches and a man's work is over. Mr. Hanley seizes his theme with a macabre ferocity which is almost frightening in the scarcely foreseen horrors he conjures up, and he forces us to take notice of the brutality and starkness of tragedy. We see, we hear, we feel the immensity of the drama which signals the grim lives of these men.

Mr. Hanley appears at times to be toying with the extreme modernism which approaches unintelligibility. He has a penchant for omitting pronouns and articles.

'Ship was there. Like a huge beast, sleeping. Was a light from an electric cluster hanging over number 2 hatch. Was like a huge beast's eye. Some steam was coming out of the pipe near the funnel. Was like hot breath coming out of huge beast's nostrils. Was slowly waking.'

But in the most recent of the three stories, which incidentally has an interesting sub-title, "A Sketch for a Novel," this bastard language has been dropped. It is a good sign, for orthodox English offers fully as much scope for impressive description as does any broken substitute.

Both "Wanderers in the Mist" and "Prisoner's Base" are translations and they are both vague and rather unsatisfactory. The former has a Slavonic heaviness and lack of direction that leaves one wondering what it was all about. Though Herr Liepmann has an easy and, occasionally, a graceful facility of language, he is unable to make his wanderers penetrate the mist of the title or to make clear the objective which necessitates their wandering. They travel through a slough of erotic dreams and sexual embraces to—what? I doubt whether Herr Liepmann even knew.

"Prisoner's Base" is more definite. There is a story of a sort but it never rings quite true. The characterisation is too weak to bring out any semblance of credence in the actions of the young man who wanders out into the woods. His return to civilisation and ultimate success points no moral but serves simply as a finale to a mediocre and curiously empty tale.

Finally, "Tiger Standish." Full of improbabilities, impossibilities even, it reads racingly and excitingly in the manner of the true thriller. Mr. Horler is a master of his particular craft. His business is to thrill his readers by fair means or foul and certainly he succeeds in doing this. He would be even better, though, if he could limit the number of improbable happenings. It mightn't be a bad plan to make all authors of detective novels try out in real life the machinations of their villains and the deeds of glory of their heroes before they commit them to paper. Mr. Horler might find it more difficult to fire a revolver in Portland Place without attracting the notice of the police than he seems to think, and I feel sure that he would experience great difficulty in strangling two men, one after the other, if he were lying in bed with a knee which hurt so badly that it brought beads of perspiration all over him every time he tried to move.

### THE TRAGEDY OF A GENIUS.

*Unpublished Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.*

Edited by E. L. Griggs. Constable. 2 vols. 37s. 6d.

"WHEN I die, I shall learn the end of 'Christabel,'"—this phrase was often used by George MacDonald to express the confidence with which he awaited death and it bears witness to the fascination which Coleridge's poem exercised on a master of literature. Alas! that there is so little to set beside that work of genius. Never was there a man so gifted who in over sixty years of life produced so little.

Coleridge's life is a tragedy of neurosis. He was undoubtedly a martyr to much internal pain, which in those days could not be safely relieved, but his real problem was not his health—his constitution must have been abnormally strong—but the conflict within his self. If only he had expended half the time he devoted to minute and nauseous descriptions of his symptoms on creative work, the world would have been incalculably the richer. If ever there was a poet who needed the help of a psychologist, it was Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

#### The High-Walled Garden

In one of those brilliant passages which continually flash out in these Letters, he describes his case perfectly. Explaining to a correspondent why he had founded the paper, "The Friend," he writes:

Nothing but a deep and habitual conviction . . . could have roused me from that dream of great internal activity and outward inefficiency, into which ill-health and a wounded spirit had gradually lulled me. Intensely studious by Habit, and languidly affected by motives of Interest or Reputation, I found in my Books and my own meditations a sort of high-walled Garden, which excluded the very sound of the World without. But the Voice within could not be thrust out—the sense of Duty unperformed and the pain of Self-dissatisfaction, aided and enforced by the sad and anxious looks of Southey and Wordsworth . . .

The tragedy of a spiritual invalid is deepened by the great qualities it defeated. There can be no better evidence of Coleridge's gifts and charm than the loving perseverance with which his friends helped and encouraged him through all his troubles and caprices. When he quarrelled with them, they forgave him. He must have been a nightmare to his publishers, always promising and never performing, yet they generally seem to have continued on good terms with him.

At his best he is one of the world's great letter-writers, this "Poet and Philosopher in a mist," as he calls himself. His correspondence abounds

in happy descriptions, such as that of his little son Hartley as "a spirit dancing on an aspen leaf—unwearied in joy, from morning to night indefatigably joyous," or the word-picture of a picnic near Grasmere.

We drank tea the night before I left Grasmere on the Island in that lovely lake, our kettle swung over the fire hanging from the branch of a Fir-tree, and I lay and saw the woods and mountains and lake all-trembling, and, as it were, *idealised*, thro' the subtle smoke which rose up from the clear red embers of the fir-apples, which we had collected; afterwards we made a glorious Bonfire on the margin by some elder bushes whose twigs heaved and sobbed in the up-rushing column of smoke—and the Image of the Bonfire and of us that danced round it—ruddy, laughing faces in the twilight—the Image of this in a Lake smooth as that sea to whose waves the Son of God had said, *Peace* . . .

In his better moments he was not without a sense of humour. He declares with gusto that the view from his window at Greta Hall was so beautiful that as his glass was opposite the window, he seldom shaved without cutting himself. "Some Mountain or Peak is rising out of the Mist, or some Slanting Column of misty Sunlight is sailing across, so that I offer up soap and blood daily, as an Eye-servant of the Goddess Nature."

#### Love and Dawning

Again his disquisition on love called forth by Crabb Robinson's forgotten translation of a German story is a page of magnificent prose, a possession for all time.

I believe that Love . . . that that Feeling (or whatever it may be more aptly called), that specific mode of Being, which one object only can possess and possesses totally is always the abrupt creation of a moment—tho' years of *Dawning* may have preceded. I said *Dawning*; for often as I have watched the Sun-rising, from the thinning, diluting Blue to the Whitening, to the fawn-coloured, the pink, the crimson, the glory, yet still the Sun itself has always *started* up, out of the horizon! between the brightest Hues of the Dawn and the first Rim of the Sun itself there is a *chasm*—all before were differences of degree, passing and dissolving into each other—but there is a difference of *Kind*—a chasm of Kind in a continuity of Time. And as no man who had never watched for the rise of the Sun could understand what I mean, so can no man who has not been in Love understand what Love is, tho' he will be sure to imagine and believe that he does.

It would be easy to multiply quotations, but enough have been given to prove that these Letters must appeal to a far wider public than specialist students of the Romantic Movement. They only confirm what was already known about their writer, but they set him before the reader, a strange and fascinating character, with a vivid realism which enthralled and delights.

The passages of literary criticism are, as was to be expected, illuminating and profound. Coleridge had a blind spot for Southey whose industry overpowered him, but as a rule, he was unable to discuss the work of even his closest friends without a disarmingly frank judgment. Cottle, his publisher, would indulge in tragedies in blank verse and on one of them, Alfred, Coleridge in a letter to Josiah Wedgwood cites maliciously Charles Lamb's criticism: "I have just received from Cottle a magnificent copy of his Guinea 'Alfred!' Four and twenty books to read in the Dog Days. I got as far as the mad monk the first day and fainted."

Even his partiality for Southey could not obscure his common sense: "He certainly will make literature more *profitable to him* from the fluency with which he writes, and the facility with which he pleases himself. But I fear that to posterity his wreath will look unseemly—here and there ever living amaranth and close by its side some weed of an hour, sere, yellow and shapeless—his exquisite beauties will lose half their effect from the bad company they keep."

### A Question of Plagiarism

Coleridge showed both good temper and sense in dealing with Walter Scott's use of Christabel in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, pointing out to several correspondents that it could not be regarded as a serious literary crime. It was certainly unfortunate that Scott did not acknowledge his indebtedness to Coleridge until twenty-five years after the first publication of his poem: for, as the Editor of these Letters remarks: "Had Scott made his acknowledgment earlier, he might have done much to increase the popularity of Coleridge's works."

At any rate in a letter to Wordsworth, Coleridge let himself go on the appearance of "The Lady of the Lake." "Merciful Apollo! what an easy pace dost thou jog on with thy unspurred yet unopinioned Pegasus! The movement of the Poem . . . is between a sleeping canter and a market woman's trot—but it is endless—I seem never to have made any way—I never remember a narrative poem in which I felt the sense of progress so languid."

These two well edited and finely printed volumes may be confidently recommended to everyone interested in human nature and good literature. The Letters they contain were withheld by the poet's grandson from the edition of 1895 to await "the coming of a milder day." That day has come and they will only inspire the reader with sympathy for an unhappy genius in his matrimonial difficulties, his struggles with opium and generally in the tragedy of his life.

### REAL ADVENTURE

*Golden Horn.* By F. Yeats-Brown. Victor Gollancz. 8s. 6d. net.

"**G**OLDEN Horn" is a wonderful book. It might be chosen for a whole year, and not only for empty August that the Book Society has picked for it. It is diverting, tragic, penetrating, sane. For sheer adventures, Mr. Yeats-Brown's tale would be hard to beat. Two-thirds of the book consists of them, from the moment when in November, 1915, he fell (literally, since it was out of an aeroplane) into the hands of the Turks, until his escape from prison in Stambul in September, '18, into the relative safety of Pera, where the armistice found him and his brother fugitive. Escape did not come easily. Mr. Yeats-Brown was always trying and sometimes being caught again. His photo in the guise of a Bulgarian mechanic during one of these interludes is charming, and reminds the reviewer of days in Bolshevik Petrograd with the papers of a Roumanian chauffeur: how convenient the Balkans can be sometimes!

### No Concealment

A yet finer avatar was that of "Mlle. Josephine," and of her, too, Mr. Yeats-Brown has preserved a portrait. She supplied him with the personality of a dashing German governess, the *adorata* of Prince Avaloff, who was about to be released after the signature of the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. But Mr. Yeats-Brown's pearls are strung on a dark and sticky thread, and weak nerves should be warned off his horrors of massacre, torture, sickness and vermin. He does not dwell unduly on them, but lets you have them in their place without concealment or prudery.

Across these pages flits the marvellous figure of the White Lady, the Edith Cavell of Constantinople, but one who operated on a wider scale and came safe through. She and Mr. Yeats-Brown with her found good to say, as indeed do most Englishmen, of the grave self-respecting Turk.

Almost more fascinating are the first hundred pages of *Golden Horn*, for here Mr. Yeats-Brown describes as though he had seen it all, the break-up of the empire of Abdul Hamid and the Near Eastern causes of the War. All one can say is that, if by chance part of the tale should be due to Mr. Yeats-Brown's imagination, his racy, catching style and clever antitheses will make every reader take it for gospel. He truly says that "the direct cause of war, however many subsidiary causes there may have been," was the pledge given by Germany to Austria on July 5th to back her up to the hilt. The picture of life in the Yildiz Kiosk and of Mesté Alem, the dancing girl, disappointed of the Sultan's favours by receipt of bad news from Salonika (where the Committee of Union and Progress was operating in close touch with Freemasons of the Grand Orient) is particularly brilliant.

J. P.



## NOT A DULL MOMENT

*Oars, Wars, and Horses*, by Major Vivian Nickalls. Hurst & Blackett. 18s.

**F**EW autobiographies are dull, whether they are cast in the form of a novel of experience or show themselves for what they are. Certainly Major Vivian Nickalls has not written a dull book and, as Lord Amphill says in his foreword, "it is well worth the while of anyone, whatever he or she may be, to read these reminiscences and casual opinions of an Englishman who has seen much and done much, although he is not one of those who have been constantly in the limelight."

There is the value of the book. It is typical. Major Nickalls is famous as oarsman and particularly sculler, though even here he was at times overshadowed by the possibly greater fame of his brother Guy; for the rest, he has been a rolling stone, gathering moss and losing it again, rowing and farming and hunting and doing business and fighting over half the world, just like the manner of good fellow and good sportsman that so many Englishmen are or hope to be.

And he has remembered truly and vividly. Eton, Oxford, the Stock Exchange, the War (France and Italy)—his scene is varied and his characters as various as those of a quick-change artist. There is hardly a form of sport he has not known—though he has little actually to tell us of fishing. Hunting is his chief love and, if his feelings betray him into an exaggerated defence of foxes, all that he has to say about horses and riders and fences and hounds, with many morals for the larger life attached, is well worth saying. Indeed, half the charm of the book is the rough-and-ready, sane and vigorous philosophy of living and dying which informs his recollections. And his knowledge of sport is encyclopædic. If anyone wants to have an accurate and lively picture of shooting in Sweden, it will be found, with a good story of the bogus parson who learned how to play poker, in a chapter headed "Good Sport."

Good stories are sprinkled everywhere, from that of how "Hoppy" Damon proposed to take four boys in his house for a walk to Henley Regatta, and another of how "Broader" was shot with an air-gun in the obvious spot while he was planting geraniums in his garden, to that of the coloured gentleman at the first Ascot after the War who diddled "the boys" by having a false bottom in the breast pocket of his exquisite morning coat.

The title of the book suggests material not half so good as that of which the book is made, and it should not be allowed to put the reader off. For the life story of Vivian Nickalls illustrates many sides of life and does it with invariable modesty, candour, and interest.

## PROSPECTS OF THE SOVIET

*New Russia*. By Anatole de Monzie. Translated by R. J. S. Curtis. Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d. net.

**M**. DE MONZIE is a successful French lawyer and Radical-Socialist politician. It was he who, during M. Herriot's first Cabinet, most successfully pressed for the recognition by France of the Soviet Government, following its recognition by England under the inspiration of Labour. In M. Herriot's present Government, he is Minister of National Education. M. de Monzie's sympathies are therefore naturally with the Soviets, and he is inclined to take their promise for performance and to gloss over their misdeeds. When allowance is made for this, *New Russia* will be found a work of real interest and value.

The author, who has an exceptionally good translator in Mr. R. J. S. Curtis, divides his book into two parts, the first dealing with the antecedents, course of the Bolshevik revolution and the personalities of the men who carried it out, and the second with the organisation, aims and prospects of the Soviet State. M. de Monzie is surprising in the extent and accuracy of his information and the moderation of his views. His special standpoint must not be forgotten but, with this reservation, he has succeeded in writing a remarkably clear and solid book on a subject that to most of the world is perfectly nebulous.

## CONTRADICTIONS AND IRRITATIONS

*Economic Tracts for the Times*. By G. D. H. Cole. Macmillan. 12s. 6d.

**T**HIS volume is open party propaganda: currency, credit, tariffs and quotas are related to Socialist exigencies. Mr. Cole is curiously forgetful that a commercial nation is terrified, rightly, of exchange fluctuations. He contradicts himself flatly (pp. 15, 76) on the "visible adverse balance of trade." Never once mentioning the Quantity Theory of Money, the foundation of Treasury post-war policy in currency, in a long passage (circa p. 33) he omits reference to the Cost of Production Theory of Gold. Without that, how can the 1925 Act be explained in relation to "sterilisation" in U.S.A.?

Anyway we are to run the Bank of England, Mr. McKenna's bank and Rothschild's in a future Socialistic State through some popularly appointed officials, taking the B.B.C. and the Central Electricity Board as mentors! The P.M.G. will be surprised; the government brokers may give a sickly and meaning grin. Our currency is to be rationed according to the Socialist junta's view of our "needs" (or its "politics"! ). All this is old stuff—it goes back to France and the Assignats. Underlying it all is the irritating parade of Socialist virtue. We have twice tried moderate doses to the ruin of the people. Germany since the war tried the full mixture: five years was enough. Whatever our future, since October Socialism is no longer practical politics. And Mr. Cole is a politician not an economist.

**A TOUR THAT BROUGHT DISASTER**

*Amanullah. Ex-King of Afghanistan. By Roland Wild. Hurst and Blackett. 12s. 6d.*

THE tragedy of Amanullah is very human. He was a man of action and a great patriot, and as such, the Afghans loved him. But he was a man of some vision as well, and this side of him was mainly responsible for his downfall. His first efforts at improving the country he usurped on the death of Habibullah were to remove the bribery and dishonesty in the administration and to break the religious power of the mullahs which, he saw, was keeping Afghanistan in a state of slavery. Those steps, not unnaturally, made many enemies, but Amanullah's popularity was sufficient to carry him through the danger.

Then came his European tour. That was a mistake of the first magnitude, not only on Amanullah's part but also on the part of the nations which sought to impress him with their Western civilisation. Partly for political ends, partly for trade, he was received everywhere with an excess of pomp and display in which he took a childish pleasure. He was like a young boy let loose in a toy shop with all control removed. With the power and glory of Western civilisation firmly fixed in his mind, he returned to Afghanistan determined to raise his country to a position of honour among the other nations of the world. Civilisation was to be brought to the wilds of Afghanistan with a vengeance.

The days were not long enough for him. New cities, new roads, cinemas, theatres, railways, aeroplanes, all these he wanted, and wanted at once. Though the Afghan grumbled, he put up with it and even paid the extra taxes which such luxuries entailed. But new ideas? New forms of dress? It was too much, especially since the forms of dress decreed were in opposition to the writings in the Koran. Insurrection, fomented by the mullahs whose power had already been undermined by Amanullah, broke out and Bacha Sachao, the water-carrier, usurped the throne.

But the tragedy of Amanullah was not then even complete. He escaped with his life and his family and a good many of the Crown jewels to a villa in one of the suburbs of Rome. Even there, he is tormented. From the degradation of exile, he watches the very reforms he tried to initiate being eagerly welcomed by the very people who thrust exile upon him. And he cannot yet understand. Mr. Wild blames his European tour. But it was more than that. Amanullah had no idea of Kingship. He had no balance and no statesmanship. He never grew up.

**WARTIME STORIES**

*Their Secret Purposes. By Hector C. Bywater. Constable. 10s. 6d. net.*

A MARVELLOUS number of wartime stories, of sea, air, and spywork, are brought together in this volume by Mr. Bywater, who has already given proof of his ability to see in places dark to the common run of men. There is the magnificent tale of how Anna of Liban lured the

German fleet into a trap off Riga, to its great damage and nearly its complete destruction; that of the blowing up of the Zeppelin sheds at Tondern; and of the dramas of the U-boat war, together with the doom of Walther Schwieger, the man who torpedoed the Lusitania.

There is an extremely interesting chapter on Heligoland, showing that its famed defences were not nearly so useful as the Germans imagined them to be, and Mr. Bywater throws new light on the fate of the Black Prince at the Battle of Jutland. He has also many thrills to give on the subjects of naval spies and their exploits, novel things for laymen on big gun shooting and some reading, none too pleasant for Americans, on the true object of the U.S. proposal for the Washington Conference as also concerning their methods during it.

Perhaps the most exciting parts of the book are those dealing with the adventures of a British agent in Germany during the war and the chapter entitled *David and Goliath* where Mr. Bywater describes for the first time, we think, in English (French readers have them from Captain Paul Chack in "On se bat sur mer") the colossal exploits of Commander Rizzo who in a motor-boat with six men torpedoed and sank the Austrian battleship *Wien*, and the Dreadnought *Szent Istvan*, and got clean away. In Mr. Bywater's judgment, "it may be doubted if any other single-handed action during the war has a great effect on the ultimate issue as Rizzo's exploit."

All lovers of adventure should read "Their Secret Purposes," and students of post war naval history must read it for the last chapter, appendices and tables.

**HALF A THRILLER**

*Death on the Cliff. By Thomas Cobb. Ernest Benn. 7s. 6d.*

WHEN Mr. Thomas Cobb died, a pleasant fountain of accomplished story-telling was dried up. He was a story-teller by instinct and he had learned his trade as a novelist. Occasionally he did something brilliant and it was always certain that he would not fall below the level of an accomplished achievement. In detective stories, to which he turned his later attention, he compensated the reader for any lack of spectacular sensations by deft construction and characterisation.

"Death on the Cliff" is a posthumous novel, of which the *ms.* was discovered among Mr. Cobb's papers. It is not a thriller by the ordinary rules. No gun is used or even carried, no knife is shown in all its pages. The very mystery of Lady Poperson's death, followed by the exactly similar death of her husband, is only exciting for its effect on the puppets of Mr. Cobb's imagination. These, their actions and reactions, are conventional but clear. They do not compel us to sit up late in order to discover what happens to them; but they are human and understandable.

This is quite a good story and just the sort of story that will occupy a railway journey or cheat the rain during a holiday.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### French and German Armies

SIR,—May I be permitted to support the thesis of your editorial comments of July 16th which Mr. W. J. Chambers challenges in your issue for July 23rd.

Your estimation regarding the Reichswehr, the Schutzpolizei and the illicit reserves I not only agree with but can augment as follows:—

*Reichswehr*, 100,000.

*Militarised police, frontier guards and railway guards (Grenzformationen and Bahnschutz)*, 110,000.

*Stahlhelm*, 150,000.

*Civilian employees of Reichswehr (Zivilangesetzte)*, 15,000.

To these may be added the 300,000 of the Hitlerist "Brown Army."

I include the Stahlhelm and the Brown Army, with special point now that General von Schleicher, by virtue of the decree issued soon after the Papen-Schleicher Government took office, has brought all these organisations directly under the control of the Government (*i.e.*, technically of the Ministry of the Interior; actually of the Ministry of Defence).

By virtue of the secret military understanding (the "Abmachungen") between the German Reichswehr Ministry and the Soviet Kommissariat for War war-material and munitions forbidden to Germany by the Versailles Treaty is manufactured for the Reichswehr in Soviet Russian factories under German technical and military supervision. The military manufactures of Krupps have been transferred from Essen to Russia. Likewise with regard to training of military air-pilots and bombers: this takes place in Russian military training centres, where special missions of Reichswehr officers train both German and Russian military airman. An elaborate system of transport has been devised by means of ostensible commercial and transport concerns, in reality conducted by the Reichswehr Ministry. German military missions have paid frequent visits to Soviet Russia, and inter-staff collaboration exists between the two armies.

The illicit Russo-German arms traffic has been in two directions—from Russia to Germany and from Germany to Russia. In some cases war material for the German army is manufactured in Soviet factories. In others, German war material is exported to, and stored in, Russian arsenals. Also, on many occasions, Germany supplies military war materials which are made into the finished article in Russia.

Thus the Reichswehr can call upon war material, of the most modern and extensive kind, not only for its own use, but also for the use of the potential National army which could be built up by the Reichswehr from the illicit reserves to be drawn from the Schutzpolizei and the various organisations (Wehrverbände) such as the Stahlhelm.

In secret alliance with the German army there stand the vast millions of Russia's Red Army.

The proofs exist for those who care to look them up. General von Seeckt, the creator of the Reichswehr, with whom the present Defence Minister, General von Schleicher, worked in collaboration on the "Abmachungen" for many years, himself has avowed the Russo-German informal alliance in his public utterances. Further proof of the "Abmachungen" is to be found in the enquiry published by the Social-Democratic Party, called "Sowjetgranaten" (Soviet shells). There are many other proofs which space forbids me to mention, but the earnest enquirer may look them all up, if he likes.

With regard to the formation of national army, the system created in advance by the Reichswehr chiefs is as follows:—

The small professional army, the Reichswehr, is capable of rapid action, great mobility and concentrated striking power. Its strength in action, according to Von Seeckt's plan, is to be kept up by second-line reinforcements under the intensive training of Reichswehr officers. In the event of it being desired to extend the size of the army, specially selected non-commissioned officers of the professional troops would become regimental officers of the "national army." The troopers of the security policy would become the non-commissioned officers of the "national army." The rank and file of that army—the illicit reserves to whom you alluded in your editorial note—would be drawn from the various semi-military organisations (Wehrverbände).

It should be noted that reduction of military effectives, such as that advocated by disarmament schemes like the Hoover Disarmament Plan, would apply to the military forces of countries like France, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, etc., whose military strengths are assessable; but Germany would escape because (1) her "official" army is already too small, but her "unofficial" army (which is enormous), being unofficial, would not come within the scope of any such disarmament agreement.

I think that the above facts adequately support your thesis as against the criticism of Mr. Chambers.

C. F. MELVILLE.

44D, Lexham Gardens, W.8.

### Veterans of Sea and Land

SIR,—I was interested to read in your paper on 16th July of the bowling contest between veterans of the Army and the Royal Navy, namely the pensioners of the Royal Hospitals of Chelsea and Greenwich.

Since the latter are no longer in-pensioners and since only naval men and marines are eligible for the special pensions, I think your correspondent may have been confusing Greenwich Hospital with the Seamen's Hospital at Greenwich. This is the parent institution of the Seamen's Hospital Society—the greatest group of Seamen's hospitals in the world—which looks after the merchant seamen of all nations in time of sickness or accident.

When the famous buildings of the Royal Hospital, Greenwich were taken over by the Royal



Naval College, the infirmary of the naval pensioners became the Dreadnought Hospital for merchant seamen and took the place of the old hospital ship of that name which for some fifty years had been moored in the Thames off Greenwich. Greenwich Hospital is under the direction of the Admiralty, but the Seamen's Hospital, Greenwich, is a voluntary hospital.

R. E. V. BAX.

*Seamen's Hospital, Greenwich.*

#### Wine and Congratulations

SIR,—I am enjoying the series of articles on wine, and all the more because the writers are claret experts, which I am not, and because I find myself in general accord, with constant and piquant disagreements in detail. For instance, I firmly hold that claret cannot be accompanied by a brown meat, but mutton rather than beef; champagne, for choice, with the latter. Still, I can imagine the success of the perfect fillet with the unrivalled claret.

The last article, on the really aged wines, appeals to me most of all, perhaps. Some of them, like a certain 1793 sherry, struck me as unpleasant, but this, I think, was due to the original type of wine. Of all vinous memories, I cherish most that of an 1858 port *from the wood*, sent over in the Burnay sale and consumed somewhere in the middle nineties; and of an 1893 Assmannshausen, combining every kind of perfection in the present year.

May I add a word on a different matter? You have already dealt adequately in two lines with a correspondent's strictures on the tone of two recent numbers. I have (as the authorities of the *Saturday* are aware) had my anxieties on this very point. But so far as I can judge, the rise to higher ways under the present régime has been, on the whole, marked and continuous. And so far, I have not even a little hatchet to grind.

RICHARD R. OTTLEY.

*1, Park Street, Bath.*

#### "Ancient and Modern"

SIR,—Have you not misquoted the opening of the hymn parody? I think it is:—

Let us *emulate* the names

Of St. Philip and St. James,

and was made up by the Benson children, perhaps at Wellington.

I personally prefer *Ancient and Modern* to *Songs of Praise*. The latter contains some beautiful poetry, but is a little too modernist for my taste: the former includes some wretched stuff, but it did a great work for the Church of England in re-introducing familiarity with the treasures of early Christian and medieval hymnody.

I think that *The English Hymnal* is a good deal the superior of both; and that it is the best hymn-book in use in any part of the Church—or indeed in any Christian body.

STEPHEN GASELEE.

*Magdalene College, Cambridge.*

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## CITY

*Lombard Street, Thursday.*

With the closing of the month of July the first stage in the Government's War Loan Conversion scheme has been concluded. That it has been a success is beyond question and for this thanks are due to the patriotism of investors who have again responded so magnificently to the National appeal to help the country back to prosperity. It is up to the Government to see that such patriotism is not misplaced and by doing everything possible to lessen the burden of taxation, help to offset the loss of income involved by the conversion operation.

Such a loss, moreover, is small compared with that suffered by investors as a result of depressed trade, much of which is directly attributable to the uneconomic methods of the late spend-thrift Government and the heavy taxation that has followed in its train. One of the pressing needs of the moment is the encouragement of capital and the restoration of confidence among investors. This can only be accomplished by the strictest economy in the national expenditure, which will give the promise, at the earliest possible moment, of reduced taxation and that much-needed relief to industry of its present intolerable burden.

**Home Railway Economies**

Satisfaction is felt in market circles with the interim statements of the Big Four British railways. The actual dividend declarations are poor enough in all conscience; but what has met with general approval is the disclosure that, under the spur of dire necessity, the railways have again been able to make such sweeping reductions in working expenses. On the four groups over £4,000,000 was saved in the past half-year, which coming as it does on top of large savings last year and the year before, indicates the almost inexhaustible power of the companies to economise when the necessity arises.

As to the future much, of course, depends on the trend of trade. At the moment there is little sign of recovery; but this may come sooner than expected and if a satisfactory conclusion can be come to of the difficulties between the road and rail transport companies a change for the better in railway traffic receipts might soon be apparent. In many respects the Home Railway market is looking more cheerful than for a long while past.

**Feeling the Pinch**

It is a curious phenomenon that what may be cited as "luxury" trades are among the last to feel the long drawn-out industrial depression. I refer to Tobacco and Brewery companies, whose income and profits so far have shown up remark-

ably well against the dark cloud of depreciation in most other directions. Enforced economy of consumers and increased taxation are, however, bound to tell their tale sooner or later, and were it not for the strong position which most of these companies have built up in better times their existence to-day might be anything but enviable. As it is they are weathering the storm remarkably well and so far, at any rate, the shareholders have little cause for complaint.

**"Smokers—"**

A reduction in the Ordinary dividend of the Imperial Tobacco Company was foreshadowed by the chairman at the last meeting, but a cut of only  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in the interim rate this year cannot be viewed with alarm. Indeed, having regard to the fact that the distributions are made free of tax and that the standard rate has been raised since a year ago from 4s. 6d. to 5s. in the £, the actual loss to the shareholders is only about three-eighths of one per cent. net.

For the whole of last year "Imps" paid 22 $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., tax free, in all. This compared with 23 $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., tax free, for 1929-30 and 23 per cent., tax free, for 1928-29. Not a bad record, especially by comparison with the results of other industrial concerns.

**"—And Beer"**

Brewery companies have also shown surprisingly good results considering the times and the heavy duties to which they are subjected. Not unnaturally the net profits of Arthur Guinness, Son and Co., declined in the past twelve months; but the set-back is small compared with the previous growth, and the dividend, which for each of the three preceding years was 35 per cent., is only 6 per cent down at 29 per cent.

Equally satisfactory is the final distribution of Watney, Combe, Reid and Co., This is to be 10 per cent., or 1 per cent. more than the most optimistic had expected. It compares with 12 per cent. actual a year ago, and makes a total of 15 per cent. for the year, against 19 per cent. for 1930-31 and 21 per cent. for 1929-30. It speaks well for the management of these huge concerns that they are able to pay the extra duties and taxes demanded of them and still make such good returns to their shareholders.

**Brighter Oil Outlook**

The Oil share market has experienced one of those periodical outbursts of strength which is usually associated with a possible rise in petrol prices. Such a rise is foreshadowed by the recent agreement come to in Paris between the American Anglo-Dutch and Rumanian oil groups whereby the price war, which has been progressing for so long, has been brought to an end.

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## The "Saturday Review" Suggests This Week :

[We hope that this page will keep our readers in touch with the best of the Theatre, Film, and Wireless programmes, of the week.—ED.]

### Next Week's Broadcasting

Interest in this week's programmes centres round the Promenade Concerts which will be broadcast every day at 8 o'clock. Monday (Regional) is a Wagner Concert, Tuesday (National) Tchaikowsky, Wednesday (Regional) Bach, Thursday (National) a British Concert, Friday (National) Beethoven, and Saturday (Regional) a mixed bag. The Bach Concert on Wednesday should be well worth hearing, with Elsie Suddaby, Keith Falkner, Eda Kersey, Robert Murchie and G. D. Cunningham, while the British Concert on Thursday will give Frank Bridge and Edgar Bainton an opportunity to handle the magnificent Symphony Orchestra in performances of their own works. David Wise, who plays the violin at Friday's "Prom," is also playing in the Children's Hour the following day. Those who scoff at the Children's Hour would do well to note this fact.

The remaining programmes not unnaturally suffer in comparison with the "Proms," but there are one or two items which may prove exceptions.

*Aug. 8th 8.30 p.m. (National).* "As It Might Have Been" will attempt to reproduce what might have been the programme on Aug. 8th,

1902. The idea is good and the material looks attractive on paper, but in programmes of this type there has always been a tendency to over-elaborate. Let us hope that the producer on this occasion will "use all gently."

*Aug. 9th 10 p.m. (National) and Aug. 11th 8.10 p.m. (Regional).* "Cuttings from the Potting Shed," produced by Charles Brewer. Mr. Brewer is extremely well known in the Midlands for his light programmes, and his infrequent visits to London are always welcome.

*Aug. 13th, 10 p.m. (National).* Francis Iles will give the first of seven weekly broadcasts entitled "By the Neck." Admirers of "Malice Aforethought" should listen to this series—preferably in the dark. There is no prize for discovering the identity of the author.

*Aug. 13th, 10.5 p.m. (Regional).* Those who have no desire for their flesh to creep can hear "A Masque of Neptune," a new operetta by Herbert Farjeon, with music by Walter Leigh. Mr. Farjeon is invariably witty and knows his microphone well.

### Theatres and Films

#### Theatres

*The Pride of the Regiment.* Clever comic opera in the modern manner of Victorian parody. 8.45. Tues. and Fri., 2.45. *St. Martin's.*

*Dangerous Corner.* The Priestley Play and, if not altogether a triumph, a show of real interest. 8.45. Wed. and Sat., 2.30. *Lyric.*

*The Gay Adventure.* Seymour Hicks at his cleverest. He and the play still running vigorously. Great fun. 8.30. Wed. and Sat., 2.30. *Whitehall.*

*Casanova.* Music, drama, romance, a gorgeous spectacle, and all the Coliseum tricks. 2.30 and 8.15. *Coliseum.*

*The Dubarry.* Music and romance again and an excellent entertainment for London visitors. 8.15. Wed. and Sat., 2.30. *His Majesty's.*

*Musical Chairs.* Actually a success for a first play by an English playwright. 8.30. Tues. and Sat., 2.30. *Criterion.*

*Evensong.* By Edward Knoblock and Beverley Nichols. 8.30 Wed. and Sat., 2.30. A vivid, human and dramatic play about the middle-ageing opera-singer. Finely acted by (among others) Edith Evans and Violet Vanbrugh. The best play, and also the best money's-worth, in London. *Queen's.*

*Twelfth Night.* 8.30. Thurs. and Sat., 2.30. A new presentation of Shakespeare's most delightful comedy. *New.*

#### Films

*Jack's the Boy.* A good rollicking farce with music. Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge. *Tivoli.*

*One Hour With You.* Not very good Lubitsch, but amusing and light. Maurice Chevalier and Jeanette MacDonald. *Carlton.*

*M.* Mr. Fritz Lang's fine picture founded on the Düsseldorf murders. *Metropole.*

*The Doomed Battalion.* A war picture laid in the Tyrol. Good photography and excellent performance by Victor Yarconi. *Empire.*

*Der Hauptmann von Köpenick.* Based on the famous hoax. A very good picture, indeed. German dialogue with English sub-titles. *Cambridge.*

#### General Releases

*Reputation.* Constance Bennett in seventeen new dresses and a good performance by Ben Lyon.

*Lovers Courageous.* Especially written for the screen by Mr. Lonsdale. Romantic comedy.